

## KINSHIP, BLOOD REVENGE, ETC.

theological as well as civil head. The Arabs had no political experience. The leaders in the kin groups were the only chiefs they had, and they established a kind of aristocracy in Persia, but the first caliphs were pure despots, like negro heads of states. The Arabs plundered the conquered states. The greatest duty known to the Arabs was blood revenge. It was their only social engine by which to restrain crime and secure some measure of order. Blood was, in their view, more holy than anything else. It put religion in the background. The kin group was the realized ideal. The gods were comparatively insignificant.<sup>1</sup> In old Arabia a man engaged in a blood feud must abstain from women, wine, and unguents.<sup>2</sup> Within the kin group there was no blood revenge, but a guilty person was held personally responsible. A guest friend ("stranger within thy gates") was not liable to blood revenge with his own kin. His status was in the tribe in which he was a guest, by which he must be defended against his tribe of origin, if the case arose.<sup>3</sup> The Arabs thought it dishonorable to take money for blood guilt. It was, they thought, like selling the blood of one's kin. Bedouin tribes in the nineteenth century refused to settle blood feuds by payments. Arbitration was admitted in the time of Mohammed, at Medina, where old blood feuds had become intolerable by their consequences.<sup>4</sup> In Egypt, in the first half of the nineteenth century, blood revenge was still observed. Third cousins of the murderer and his victim were the limits of responsibility on either side.<sup>5</sup>

**552.** Development of the philosophy of blood revenge. Blood revenge was nothing but an exercise of revenge and it had all the limitations of revenge. It produced a rude fear of conse-

quences and had some of the effects of the  
administration of  
justice. However, it had no process of proof, no  
due notion of  
guilt, no means of following up responsibility.  
Therefore it  
could not infuse fear into the hearts of the  
guilty. It was

<sup>1</sup> Wellhausen, *Skizzen und Vorarbeiten*, III, 194.

<sup>2</sup> W. R. Smith, *Relig. of the Semites*, 482.

<sup>8</sup> The Hebrew law was, " The stranger that sojourneth with  
you shall be unto  
you as the home-born among you" (Levit. xix. 34).

\* Proksch, *Blutrache bei den Arabern*, 18, 30, 33, 36, 51, 54.

<sup>5</sup> Lane, *Mod. Egypt.*, I, 295.